

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicants regard as the invention. The applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this rejection.

As indicated above, claim 7 has been amended in order to more particularly point out, and distinctly claim the subject matter to which the applicants regard as their invention, and in order to correct the noted informality therein.

Accordingly, the withdrawal of the outstanding rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, is in order, and is therefore respectfully solicited.

As to the merits of this case, first, claims 4, 5 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by (JP 05-000390). The applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this rejection.

As to claims 4 and 5, JP05-390 is not a narrow band laser device. This point of difference leads to the technical problem solved by the applicants' instant claimed invention; namely, the problem peculiar to the narrow band laser device as described in line 12 on page 4 to line 8 on page 5 of the applicants' specification. The JP'390 device does not have the structural arrangement for solving or suggesting this peculiar deficiency.

As to claim 10, a light transmitting section (203) of JP'390 is an opening and differs from "solid" of the applicants' instant claimed invention.

In view of the above, the withdrawal of the outstanding anticipation rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) based on (JP 05-000390) is in order, and is therefore respectfully solicited.

Secondly, claims 1 - 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by JP06-164030. The applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this rejection.

JP '030 describes laser oscillation apparatus having a shielding plate (11) and a holder (15) having case (16) and a cover (17). The shielding plate (11) is composed of a ceramic and has a small diameter hole to limit the luminous-flux diameter of a laser beam. The reflection factor of the ceramic with reference to the laser beam is high. It is the applicants' position that the device of JP '030 is misinterpreted in the outstanding Office Action because a heating means or a temperature measuring device, defined in the claimed invention, are not described.

Accordingly, the withdrawal of the outstanding anticipation rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) based on JP06-164030 is in order, and is therefore respectfully solicited.

Thirdly, claims 6 - 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by (JP 8-111551). The applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this rejection.

As discussed above with respect to JP '390, JP '551 is not a narrow band laser device, and the claimed invention, as set forth in claim 6 (as in claim 4, discussed above), is distinguishable over the teachings of JP '551.

As to claim 8, JP '551 does not disclose the claimed structural arrangement whereby "the laser light is refracted at the light shielding elements."

Accordingly, the withdrawal of the outstanding anticipation under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) based on (JP 8-111551) is in order, and is therefore respectfully solicited.

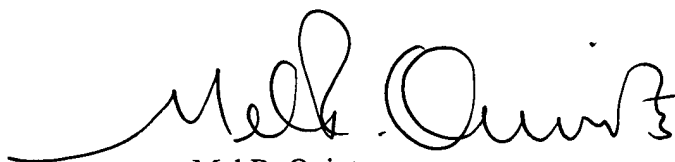
If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "**Version with markings to show changes made.**"

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

ARMSTRONG, WESTERMAN & HATTORI, LLP



Mel R. Quintos
Attorney for Applicants
Reg. No. 31,898

MRQ/lrj/ipc

Atty. Docket No. 011405
Suite 1000, 1725 K Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 659-2930



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PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

Enclosures: Version with markings to show changes made

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 28, line 7, with the following rewritten paragraph:

If the light shielding elements 37A to 37C described above are placed in, for example, the excimer laser device 1 as shown in FIG. 1, the laser light 11 radiated to the portions to which the nonreflective coating is applied passes through the light shielding elements 37A to 37C to be the rectangular laser light 11. The undesired laser light 11A radiated to the portions to which the total reflection coating is applied, other than the above, is reflected at high reflectivity, and is radiated to the absorption material 42 as shown in FIG. 1. Specifically, the portions to which the nonreflective coating is applied become the light transmitting sections 47A to 47C, and the portions to which the total reflection coating is applied become the light [transmitting] shielding sections 49A to 49C.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claim 9 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please amend claims 1 - 6, 8 and 10 as follows:

1. (Amended) A narrow band ultraviolet laser device comprising light shielding elements [(37A to 37C)] having

light transmitting sections [(47A to 47C)] each constituted by an opening for transmitting laser light [(11)], and

light shielding sections [(49A to 49C)] that surround said light transmitting sections [(47A to 47C)], remove undesired laser light [(11A)] from an optical path and shape the laser light [(11)] into a predetermined form,

wherein heating means [(45)] for heating said light transmitting sections [(47A to 47C)] are included in the vicinity of said light shielding elements [(37A to 37C)].

2. (Amended) The narrow band ultraviolet laser device according to Claim 1, wherein said heating means [(45)] also performs heating in a state in which the laser light [(11)] is not oscillated.

3. (Amended) The narrow band ultraviolet laser device according to Claim 1 or Claim 2, further comprising:

a laser controller [(4)] for controlling laser oscillation; and
temperature measuring devices [(48)] for measuring temperature of gases inside said light transmitting sections [(47A to 47C)],

wherein said temperature measuring devices [(48)] give information regarding said temperature of the gases to said laser controller [(4)], and

wherein said laser controller [(4)] starts laser oscillation based on said information.

4. (Amended) A narrow band ultraviolet laser device comprising light shielding elements [(37A to 37C)] having

light transmitting sections [(47A to 47C)] for transmitting laser light [(11)], and light shielding sections [(49A to 49C)] that surround said light transmitting sections [(47A to 47C)], remove undesired laser light [(11A)] from an optical path and shape the laser light [(11)] into a predetermined form,

wherein spraying means [(40)] for spraying an inert gas is included in the vicinity of said light shielding elements [(37A to 37C)].

5. (Amended) A narrow band ultraviolet laser device comprising light shielding elements [(37A to 37C)] having

light transmitting sections [(47A to 47C)] for transmitting laser light [(11)], and light shielding sections [(49A to 49C)] that surround said light transmitting sections [(47A to 47C)], remove undesired laser light [(11A)] from an optical path and shape the laser light [(11)] into a predetermined form,

wherein said light shielding sections [(49A to 49C)] are formed of a material including at least any one of aluminum, aluminum alloy and copper.

6. (Amended) A narrow band ultraviolet laser device comprising light shielding elements [(37A to 37C)] having light transmitting sections [(47A to 47C)] for transmitting laser light [(11)], and

light shielding sections [(49A to 49C)] that surround said light transmitting sections [(47A to 47C)], remove undesired laser light [(11A)] from an optical path and shape the laser light [(11)] into a predetermined form,

wherein said light shielding sections [(49A to 49C)] are formed of a material which transmits the laser light [(11)], and have a function of removing the undesired laser light (11A) from the optical path.

7. (Amended) The narrow band ultraviolet laser device according to Claim 6, wherein said removing function is performed [at] by total reflection coating formed on surfaces of said light shielding sections [(49A to 49C)].

8. (Amended) A narrow band ultraviolet laser device comprising light shielding elements [(51A, 51B)] for removing undesired laser light [(11B)] from an optical path and shaping laser light [(11)] into a predetermined form, and

light transmitting sections [(47A, 47B)] formed by said light shielding elements [(51A, 51B)], for transmitting the laser light [(11)],

wherein said light shielding elements [(51A, 51B)] are formed of a material which transmits the laser light [(11)], and have a function of [removing] refracting the laser light to remove the undesired laser light [(11B)] from the optical path.

10. (Amended) A narrow band ultraviolet laser device comprising light shielding elements [(37A to 37C)] having

light transmitting sections [(47A to 47C)] for transmitting laser light [(11)], and light shielding sections [(49A to 49C)] that surround said light transmitting sections [(47A to 47C)], remove undesired laser light [(11A)] from an optical path and shape the laser light [(11)] into a predetermined form,

wherein said light transmitting sections [47A to 47C)] are formed of a solid which transmits the laser light [(11)].